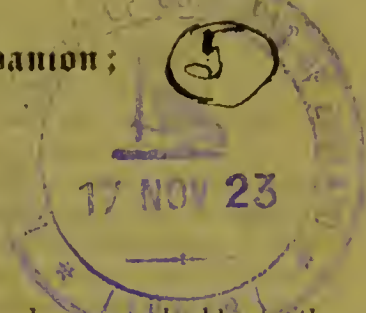


The Fireside Companion ;

NO. XI.

VACCINATION.



No discovery of our own times has proved more valuable to the world than that of Dr. Jenner, to whom we are indebted for the important fact that an innocent distemper transplanted from the cow, proves an effectual remedy against the contagion of the Small-Pox, a disease which, loathsome in appearance and malignant in its nature, has proved for many centuries the scourge of the human race.

Some uncertainty exists as to the period when Small-Pox first made its appearance in this country. It seems to have been well known in China in very remote times, and visited Arabia and most of the other nations of the East, long before it extended its ravages into this quarter of the globe.

It has been conjectured by some of our earlier writers, that this dreadful malady was brought into England about seven hundred years ago, by our countrymen returning from the wars in the Holy Land ; but there can be little doubt that it existed here considerably before that period, as it made its appearance in Europe so early as the eighth century, when it is said to have been first introduced into Spain by the Moorish army, led by Count Julian, who, in revenging his private quarrels with Roderick, the last of the Gothic Kings of Spain, became the occasion of communicating this fatal disease to his fellow-countrymen, and from them it was quickly propagated amongst other European nations. On the discovery of America by Columbus, his followers carried the disease among the Indian nations of that continent, and for want of that knowledge of its proper treatment it spread like a pestilence wherever it appeared.

England stands indebted to a celebrated female for the first step towards putting a stop to its virulence. In the year 1717, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu having accompanied her husband as Ambassador to the Turkish Court, acquired during her residence at Constantinople, a perfect acquaintance with the practice of Inoculation, which was known there by the term of *sowing* or *buying* the Small-Pox. The person who desired to receive the infection bartered a certain number of dates or raisins in exchange for some of the crusts or matter of the Small-Pox, which being rubbed on the back of the head (previously pricked with a needle or lancet) communicated the disorder, under a greatly mitigated character. The mode of treatment during the ensuing fever consisted in keeping the patient cool, which, united with a spare diet, greatly promoted the successful issue

more in the present place. There are also the Courts of Law, with the Trial by Jury for their protection, and the right of petitioning the Monarch, or either House of Parliament, for the redress of grievances. There is an auxiliary right of the subject, which the turbulent spirit of modern times has wrested from the people in particular districts, for a while : it is that of having arms for their defence suitable to their condition and degree ; but the persons employed to put this ancient privilege in abeyance take care not to abuse the power extended to them by taking away such weapons as are manifestly intended for protection from violence and nightly depredators. Those who provide themselves with such instruments, for the purposes of rapine and to commit assaults upon the public tranquillity, may be easily distinguished from the disorderly citizen ; and the conservators of the peace do but discharge their duty when they take from them the means of effecting their unlawful purposes.

J. S.

THE BRITISH CHARACTER.

(*From Goldsmith's Traveller.*)

Stern o'er each bosom reason holds her state,
 With daring aims irregularly great :
 Pride in their port, defiance in their eye,
 I see the lords of human kind pass by ;
 Intent on high designs, a thoughtful band,
 By forms unfashion'd, fresh from nature's hand,
 Fierce in their native hardness of soul,
 True to imagin'd right, above control,
 While e'en the peasant boasts these rights to scan,
 And learns to venerate himself as man.
 Thine, Freedom, thine the blessings pietur'd here,
 Thine are those charms that dazzle and endear ;
 Too blest indeed were such without alloy,
 But foster'd e'en by freedom ills annoy ;
 That independence Britons prize too high,
 Keeps man from man, and breaks the social tie ;
 The self-dependent lordlings stand alone,
 All claims that bind and sweeten life unknown ;
 Here, by the bonds of nature feebly held,
 Minds combat minds, repelling and repell'd ;
 Ferments arise, imprison'd factions roar,
 Represt ambition struggles round her shore ;
 Till, over-wrought, the gen'ral system feels
 Its motions stop, or frenzy fire the wheels.
 Oh then how blind to all that truth requires,
 Who think it freedom when a part aspires !
 Calm is my soul, nor apt to rise to arms,
 Except when fast approaching danger warms :
 But when contending chiefs blockade the throne,
 Contracting regal pow'r to stretch their own ;
 When I behold a factious band agree
 To call it freedom when themselves are free ;
 Fear, pity, justice, indignation, start,
 Tear off reserve, and bare my swelling heart ;
 Till half a patriot, half a coward grown,
 I fly from petty tyrants to the throne.

of the complaint. The medical practice at that time pursued in England bore a remarkable contrast to the Turkish method: the external air was carefully excluded from the patient, who was then compelled to breathe an infected atmosphere of his own, almost suffocated by clothing and close confinement. We have since shown our wisdom in returning to the Eastern practice.

Being fully persuaded of the superiority of the Turkish method, Lady Mary had her son inoculated at Constantinople, and on her return to England, some years after, it was performed on another child, under the same favourable circumstances. By this time her influence and example had introduced the new system into great notice. In 1721 inoculation was publicly performed on seven condemned criminals, by permission of King George I., who soon after consented to have two of the Royal Children inoculated in like manner; and all these cases terminated so favourably, that the practice soon became general amongst persons of condition.

But the great mass of the people for many years resisted the practice. A multitude of objections were started against it; many of the Faculty were decidedly averse to inoculation, while other persons hesitated to receive it, under scruples of conscience not less difficult to overcome. While they acknowledged its advantages, they doubted whether they could lawfully inflict a disease upon themselves or their children, without offence to God. A variety of publications appeared on the subject, which was disputed with much zeal and ability. Perhaps these objections may receive a satisfactory explanation, by asking—1st, Whether is it lawful to save life or destroy it? 2d, Whether of two evils we are not permitted to choose the least?—and 3dly, Whether inoculation is *doing evil, that good may come*, any more than when we take off a limb to save a life? We advert to these remarks, because we have heard some persons condemn even Vaccination, as an unwarrantable interference with God's decrees.

Inoculation meanwhile overcame by degrees much of the popular prejudice, and at length made its way throughout the kingdom. Daniel Sutton, an apothecary of Ingatestone, in Essex, was among the first to avail himself of the process as a source of great profit to himself: he resorted to the usual means of bringing himself into notice by advertising certain nostrums, by which he pretended to assist the recovery of his patients, and soon brought multitudes from all quarters to receive inoculation at his hands.

In 1746 the Small-pox Hospital was erected in London, for the express purpose of inoculating the poor; and in 1754, the College of Physicians formally pronounced their opinion in favour of the new system. The efficacy of the process was incontestibly proved by showing the great saving of human life which was thereby effected. The deaths by natural Small-pox were officially stated at the time to be no less than 72 in every 400 persons; whereas not more than one person in four hundred died under inoculation. But still the mortality arising from Small-pox throughout the kingdom remained undiminished, for great as were the benefits of inoculation they did not

counterbalance the increase of those who received the infection, the number of persons who consented to be inoculated bearing as yet no proportion to those who refused it. The average deaths by Small-pox, as stated by a Committee of the House of Commons, were no less than 36,000 annually.

It was reserved for Dr. Jenner to have the honour of discovering a specific to counteract this tremendous disease. This celebrated physician, in the course of his practice in Gloucestershire, ascertained that a disorder was well known in the dairies, which affected the teats of cows, and was reported to be an effectual security against the Small-pox, to any who by handling the animal received the infection upon their fingers. Having established himself at Berkeley, he gave his undivided attention to the subject; he learnt that the medical practitioners in the neighbourhood were not unacquainted with the popular notion, but that they considered the Cow-pox no *certain* preventive to Small-pox, although in some cases it might prove so.

This led him to a more minute investigation of the fact; he ascertained that there are several eruptive disorders among the milkers, all derived from the cow, the specific character of each requiring a nice and accurate distinction: he found that only one of these was an effectual preventive to Small-pox, but that this was invariable in its effects. To render it effectual it was necessary the fluid should be taken from the pustules in an early stage, those in their decline not proving a protection against Small-pox infection.

Having now satisfactorily ascertained the character of the true Vaccine or Cow-pox, and the proper period for taking the lymph or fluid used for inoculation, he ventured to make known to the world this highly interesting discovery, and it was not long before the general attention of the Faculty was directed to the investigation of a subject of so much importance to the public welfare. Much controversy ensued; many able men, who at first were disposed to doubt of its efficacy, soon became the zealous friends of Vaccination; and at length it was received and adopted by all men of medical science as an invaluable substitute for inoculation by Small-pox.

So soon as the credit of Dr. Jenner's great discovery was fully established, his services came under the consideration of Parliament, and a reward of £20,000 was voted to him for having thus rendered so important a benefit to his fellow-creatures. The most valuable part of the discovery was its *permanency* as a preventive to Small-pox. This was proved by long and undoubted experience; many persons who had received the Cow-pox, fifteen, twenty-seven, and even fifty years before, were examined by medical men of high reputation, and were then exposed to the contagion of the Small-pox without taking the disease.

That numberless failures, or reputed failures, should be recorded, need not excite wonder, when we consider the many blunders which must have attended the early practice of Vaccination. It was long before those who inoculated with Cow-pox had a proper knowledge of that peculiar species of the disorder which is alone effectual,

as a preventive fluid ~~was~~ often employed which was not the true kind. It should also be observed, that while Vaccination was imperfectly understood, due attention was not paid by those who practised it in waiting the progress of the disease, to ascertain that their patients had received it into the constitution,—a point only to be determined by watching the successive changes of the pustules. And further, that the fluid for inoculation must be taking during that stage of the disease when it will be sure of its effect. A due regard to these observations will enable our readers to judge why so many failures have occurred, and must still occur, unless they resort to regular practitioners to receive Vaccination.

It also should be remembered that great prejudices still prevail among uneducated persons as to the eminent advantages of this mode of inoculation. The prevailing dislike to Cow-pox, arising from a belief that gross humours are thereby introduced into the constitution, can only be effectually removed by their own observation and experience. It is an established maxim among physicians, that no disease can communicate any other disease than itself; but it will not be sufficient to bring forward the opinion of the most learned men to show the absurdity of any popular prejudice, because those who are invited to adopt Vaccination have an undoubted right to satisfy themselves that it is innocent in itself, as well as sure in its effects.

We must allow time for the removal of doubt and suspicion. When those who are now prejudiced against Vaccination perceive that their opinions were unfounded—when they see the children of others, who have been thus protected from Small-pox, pass through the process with scarce any ailment, and grow up healthy and vigorous, and free from any supposed taint from Cow-pox,—they will surely bless the day when a discovery so invaluable was made, and hasten to secure to themselves and their children an exemption from that loathsome and dangerous disease, to which thousands fall victims by persisting in their incredulity.

In concluding these remarks, we are happy to lay before our readers a document of the highest authority in favour of Vaccination, which contains a most authentic and interesting statement of the general progress of the system in this kingdom, as well as other nations, to which the benefits of Dr. Jenner's discovery have been extended.

EDITOR L.

Copy of the REPORT to the Secretary of State for the Home Department, from the National Vaccine Establishment.—Dated 8th April 1819.—Ordered by the House of Commons to be printed.

To the Right Hon. Lord Viscount Sidmouth, Principal Secretary of State for the Home Department, &c.

National Vaccine Establishment, Percy-Street, 8th April 1819.

MY LORD,—The Board have the honour of reporting to your Lordship, that during the year 1818, the number of persons vaccinated at the stations in London and the vicinity, have amounted to 6,289; and their

correspondents throughout the kingdom have reported that they have vaccinated 57,897. These numbers however are not to be considered as the whole; for many surgeons who are supplied with Vaccine Lymph from this Establishment, do not report the entire number of those whom they vaccinate.

From the first establishment of the Board in 1808, an annual increase has taken place in the demand for Vaccine Lymph, of which 50,116 charges have been distributed to the Public during the preceding year.

The Board have much satisfaction in laying before your Lordship unequivocal evidence of the increasing advantages of the Jennerian discovery: for it appears from the Bills of Mortality of London, that instead of 2,000 deaths by Small-Pox, which were the annual average previous to the practice of Vaccination, there died last year only 421.

In addition to this gratifying decrease of the ravages of Small-Pox in the metropolis, the Board are also enabled to state, from authentic information, that its diminution has likewise been considerable in many other places. In the towns of Shrewsbury, Worksop, and Faversham, and in the city of Armagh, no case of Small-Pox has for some time occurred; and the Board are informed by the Secretary of Addinbroke's Hospital in Cambridge, a district where great impediments have been heretofore thrown in the way of Vaccination, that 8,000 persons were vaccinated during the last year. As an additional proof of the vast progress of Vaccination in the British possessions in India, the Board have much pleasure in noticing a communication from the Abbe Dubois, Catholic Missionary in the Mysore, in which he states that he has himself had the happiness to secure nearly a lac (above 98,000) of individuals from the Small-Pox, without one authenticated case of failure. By a return from Ceylon also, it appears that 23,464 persons were vaccinated in that Government alone during the year 1817.

It is a very singular fact that the Small-Pox was extinguished sixteen years ago in the parish of Mickleham, in Surrey, and has never appeared in it since: this has been accomplished by Mr. Curtis, surgeon, at Dorking, who vaccinated periodically all the poor of the neighbourhood, by the direction and at the expense of the late Wm. Locke, Esq. of Norbury Park, whose beneficent scheme, after his decease, was laudably continued by his widow. Such praiseworthy examples, highly deserving general imitation, unequivocally evince what may be effected by a judicious application of the power of the Vaccine.

It will be gratifying to your Lordship to know, that independently of the continued distribution of Vaccine Lymph from this Board, to all parts of the British dominions, the reputation of its purity is such that applications for a supply are often made from foreign countries.

His Excellency Prince Esterhazy, Ambassador from the Austrian Court, lately requested some charges of lymph to vaccinate the children of the Imperial Family. These were immediately transmitted, and proved effective; since which, a fresh supply has been required to vaccinate the children of the Archduke Francis. Vaccine Lymph has also been transmitted to Carlsruhe, to the island of Madeira, to New South Wales, to Sierra Leone, to Otaheite, to Rio Janciro; and thence has been forwarded to Bahia, Pernambuco, and again to New South Wales. From these favourable statements the Board have no serious deductions to make, although they feel it their duty candidly to communicate some unfortunate events—unfortunate more from their unfriendly impression upon the minds of many, than from any substantial doubts they can create of the efficacy of the vaccine.

Five cases have been reported to the Board, of vaccinated persons

who have subsequently died of small-pox. In one of these cases, it was clearly ascertained that the only vaccine vesicle which had been excited was disturbed and broken in its progress, which there is great reason for believing has been a frequent cause of the insecurity of Vaccination; in the other cases, no detail respecting the Vaccination could be obtained, and they were moreover all vaccinated at a period of time when the mode of vaccination, and the management of the vesicle, were not well understood.

In several parts of the United Kingdom, particularly near Edinburgh, an anomalous disease, bearing some resemblance to Small-pox, has appeared in many persons. It has been described by many professional gentlemen of great eminence and experience. From their statements it appears that this eruption attacked indiscriminately persons who had been previously vaccinated, who had had the Small-pox, or who had not gone through either disease.

Of whatever defined nature this eruption may be considered, it is highly gratifying to remark, that no death occurred in any person who had been previously vaccinated, neither was it in them so violent; whereas in many others it was malignant, and proved mortal to several. It has therefore been justly concluded, from the investigation which has been instituted in Edinburgh, that the circumstances which have occurred in the history of this eruption more strongly confirm the utility of Vaccination.

As a diversity of opinion, however, has prevailed of the precise nature of this eruption among those who witnessed it, considerable alarm has been excited in the public mind. The Board are unable to form any very decided opinion upon this subject; because, in the cases where this varioloid disease is stated to have occurred subsequently to Small-pox, the symptoms of the Small-pox have not been detailed; and in cases where it followed the Vaccine, the particulars of the Vaccine process, except in a few instances, are omitted: but in these few, it appears that the Vaccine process had not been conducted on the plan recommended by this Board, and which experience has proved to be most efficacious.

In London, some eruptive cases have occurred in persons who had been previously vaccinated; these the Board have had opportunities of examining; and it has been discovered by the Directors that the eruption, in most instances, was the Chicken-pox; in a few, the mitigated Small-pox; and it should not be passed unnoticed, that in all these latter cases, Vaccination had been performed and conducted in the manner which was originally frequently practised, before the adoption of the superior method which has been recommended by the Board, and which they have taken much pains to inculcate in their printed directions.

For it is a fact which cannot be too strongly impressed upon the public, that there is a considerable difference of success in the different modes of inserting and conducting the Vaccine. Hence the Board are informed by some surgeons, that a portion of their vaccinated patients have been subsequently affected with the Small-pox, though in a mild form; while other surgeons state, that they have vaccinated many thousands without a single failure. As, however, the cases vaccinated at the stations of the Board are all registered, they possess the sure means of ascertaining the real effects of correct vaccination.

From the foundation of this establishment in the year 1808, to the present year, there have been vaccinated at these stations in London 52,253 persons. Only four of these are yet known to have had the Small-pox afterwards, and these were never very seriously ill. This triumph





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